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OUR COUNTRY:

ITS

PEACE, PROSPERITY, AND PERPETUITY:

A

THANKSGIVING SERMON

PREACHED IN

COEYMANS, ALBANY COUNTY, N. Y.,

ON

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27. 1862.

BY

JOHN D. LAWYER,

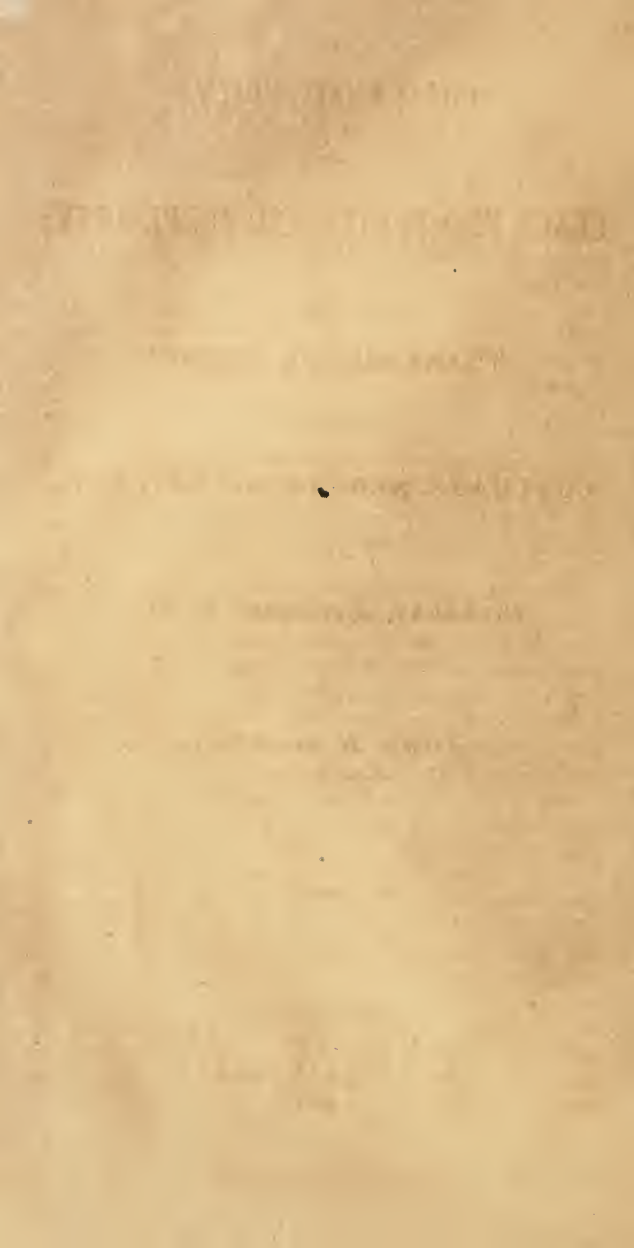
MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL.

ALBANY, N. Y.:

PUBLISHED BY S. R. GRAY.

No. 38 STATE STREET.

1863.



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MUNSELL, PRINTER,
ALBANY.

OUR COUNTRY.

A THANKSGIVING SERMON.

“PRAY FOR THE PEACE OF JERUSALEM ; THEY SHALL PROSPER THAT LOVE THEE. PEACE BE WITHIN THY WALLS AND PROSPERITY WITHIN THY PALACES. FOR MY BRETHREN AND COMPANIONS SAKES, I WILL NOW SAY, PEACE BE WITHIN THEE. I WILL SEEK THY GOOD, BECAUSE OF THE HOUSE OF THE LORD OUR GOD.”—*Ps. cxvii* : 6–9.

In accordance with the acknowledged usage, we most cheerfully comply with the recommendation of the Chief Magistrate of this State, to assemble for public worship, and devote it as a “Day of Praise, Thanksgiving and Prayer to Almighty God,” devoutly acknowledging His power and goodness, and our dependence on His mercy and forbearance.

The Psalm from which we have selected our text, contains an impassioned and earnest expression of regard, on the part of the sacred writer, for his native country, and the city with which more especially, its honor and glory — its history and religion, were associated. With no people, probably, has the love of country ever been more strongly marked than that to which the Psalmist belonged. To the Jew, Jerusalem was Judea, and Judea was the world. To love Jerusalem was to love his country, and to go out of Palestine was equivalent to go out from the habitable portions of the earth.

There are circumstances connected with the history of the Jews, which may account for this. They had been from the first a very *exclusive* people. Their whole history and education had contributed to render them so. The great Jehovah had dealt with them as with no other people on the earth. They had been a chosen nation, selected as the peculiar people of God. They had been miraculously preserved and protected by him. Judea had been from the earliest period, the Land promised to their fathers—the designated home and territory of this nation. They had thus come to regard themselves as the favored people of Heaven, and their land as a choice spot of the Universe—the beauty and excellency of all countries—and Jerusalem as the queen city of the earth—a sacred place, to be honored and praised aloud of God and man. In addition to all this, among the more devout and enlightened Jewish minds, there was a manifest regard for true religion and the sincere worship of Jehovah, elevated above all others for its purity and spirituality. Patriotism was with them a noble and highly religious sentiment

From these, and various like causes, it is easy to see how the national policy—the love of their own country—became so intensely and peculiarly developed among that people. Go where he might—whatever might befall him—the *Jew* never forgot his beloved country. In all his wanderings, he saw no land like his own—no city like Jerusalem. In all the East—along the Euphrates and the Nile, and in the sunny South, there were no palaces so grand and magnificent as hers. The captivity and the exile of *seventy years*, did not obliterate its glory and splendor from his memory. And to this very day, the Jewish wanderer and exile, the blinded representative of a race that was once illustrious and exalted for

patriotism ; feels content to close in poverty and want, a life of weariness and contempt, if he may but *bury* his mortal body aside the mouldering ashes of his fathers, within the shadows of the once splendid and holy city.

My theme on this occasion is — “THE PEACE, PROSPERITY AND PERPETUITY OF OUR COUNTRY.” I shall consider some of the reasons why, as a people — a christian people — we should pray for *the peace and prosperity* of our beloved country ; and also, notice some of the elements which are at work, calculated to disturb its peace, retard its prosperity, and destroy its perpetuity.

As a christian people, we should pray and labor for the Peace and Prosperity of our country. We must have *peace* as well as *prosperity*. Pray for the Peace of our American Republic — they shall prosper who love America. *Peace* be within thy borders, and *prosperity* throughout the whole land. For the sake of my countrymen — I will now say, Peace be within these *United States* ; because of Christianity — the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, I will seek thy good. *Peace* without *prosperity* is but a secure possession of misery and degradation ; and *Prosperity* without peace, is a very dangerous and uncertain state of happiness. Our glorious *Union* is safe — none but ruffian hands dare touch it — none but frenzied minds speak of its dissolution. The love of country is not to be regarded by us as the mere impulse and instinct of nature ; but as a sacred and a most imperative christian duty — a duty which pertains to us as to no other people, and binding on us with a peculiar force — such as obligates no other nation on the earth to the same extent. The following are some of my reasons :

1. America is the land of our Fathers. The history of this country is such as should endear it to us by indissoluble ties. It is the purchase of great sufferings and sacrifices — of great toil and

deprivation — of honored lives and truly noble and heroic souls. Do we realize the *price* that has been paid for the privileges we so quietly and richly enjoy? Do we estimate the value? The men who laid the foundation of our Republic; and especially of the Empire State, were men of no ordinary degree — men who would honor the world at any age. They were the men for the times; men who thought, toiled and lived, not for themselves alone, but for posterity; men of large souls, looking to the future; men of faith in God — men of brave hearts. Many of them tasted death for us. What they did, and what they suffered, has passed away from the memories of men, but what they achieved by those sufferings remain our *heritage*; even at this day — our glorious and common heritage!

Well may we love our Country that was purchased for us at such a price. It is blessed to love America for our father's sake. A due regard for one's Ancestors seems to be a trait of our common nature — an emotion universally exhibiting itself among mankind. Most assuredly, there is no people on earth, that have greater reason than we, to revere their ancestry; or to prize and love the country of their birth and of their labors, because it was their father's land. We should pray and labor for the peace and prosperity of our Country, because —

2. America is the home of our children. We are naturally interested in all that pertains to the welfare of those who are to come after us — who shall take our places and bear our names. Our children are dear to us. We seek to procure for them all the advantages, mental and moral, which are within our reach; we make great sacrifices to give them an education; we toil and deny ourselves to lay up for them a competent provision against want and future calamity. We labor to promote their temporal welfare. But what richer

legacy can we possibly leave our children, than a free, peaceful, and prosperous country? A country where the advantages of education are open to all — where the Bible is a free and unchained book — where Christianity is the religion — where every man has liberty to worship Jehovah our God, according to the dictates of his own conscience — where every man can pursue that occupation which he prefers — where industry can always secure the comforts of life — where law is supreme, virtue respected and religion honored. Such a legacy as this is far above all price. Such a Country is our State — the Empire State; and such a Country is every free State of our Union.

What a gift it would be, could you this day by some magic power, confer it upon the toiling, suffering, struggling sons of Europe; upon Italy — upon Hungary — upon France. Could the brave hearts that suffered and battled for our freedom and the advantages we now enjoy, look through the long vista of intervening years; and behold our present prosperous condition as a people — the result of their labors and sacrifices — how would it amply repay them for all they so manfully achieved and so heroically endured. It is therefore, our duty as a people — it is a Christian duty, to perpetuate and hand down to our posterity a *heritage*, not merely as rich and glorious as that which we *ourselves* have received from our forefathers; but one so far exalted, enlightened and improved by our labors, that our children shall be as much indebted to us in this respect, as *we* are to our fathers. Another reason arises from the fact that —

3. America sustains a relation to and exerts an influence over the world. America is a land of freedom. Our country is the home and refuge of the oppressed — an asylum, where the poor outcast and exiled from every nation, may find protection and rest. The Declaration of our Independence

is a perpetual *habeas corpus act* to the whole world. The patriot, compelled to fly from the tyrant's sword and the despot's rod, knows whither to direct his steps. Once on these happy shores, and no foreign power has a sword long enough, or an arm strong enough to reach him.

The victims of poverty and woe — of misrule and neglect find here a congenial home and the means of ample support. What thousands are wending their way every year to our land; and what thousands more unable to come, look with longing eye and hopeful heart on the bright star that hangs in the west. Should that star fall, what darkness would shut down on the nations of the earth. Even the poor deluded victims of Hierarchical despotism, and groaning under ecclesiastical tyranny, may find a shelter from the strong and mighty arm of Romanism, which has accumulated strength around it for thirteen centuries. God will break that arm in our country by the force of truth, and set the fettered and darkened mind at perfect liberty. I have no fears for the Papal power, it is perfect weakness in a land of Light and Truth and Freedom. Romanism is rapidly declining in this Country. The *Tablet*, a Roman Catholic paper, published in New York, makes the following striking confession in 1857: "Few Insurance companies," it says, "we venture to assert, would take a risk on the *national life* of a *Creed*, which puts *five hundred* daily into the grave, for *one* it wins to its communion. And yet this is what Catholicism is doing in these States while we write." In 1846 the Roman Church in Poland numbered 3,794,000, and at the beginning of 1856, only 3,607,000, being a decrease in ten years of 187,000 members.

Then for the sake of the world — of suffering humanity in all lands; let us earnestly pray for "the peace and prosperity of our Country," and labor to promote and perpetuate it. That man

entertains but a narrow and contracted view of the relation we sustain, and the influence we exert, as a nation, to the hopes and prospects of other nations, who can find none other but merely personal and selfish reasons for desiring and laboring to promote its welfare. Another reason that I would mention is —

4. The part America is destined to act in the evangelization of the world. If the everlasting gospel is ever to be promulgated throughout the world, and the spirit of Christianity prevail and rule over the kingdoms of the earth, as I believe it is to be, in the providence of God, it will be accomplished through human instrumentality. The part which we as a Christian nation are to sustain in this mighty work, is truly a sublime one. “The rapid changes in religious belief that are taking place all over our land — the decline of old dogmas — the consequent unsettling of opinions — the struggles in many portions for a firmer and fresher faith, all these have imposed the duty to disseminate the seeds of truth and life with an energetic and liberal hand. Already are Christian Missionaries scattered over almost the whole earth; and the unsearchable riches of Jesus, the “Christ of God,” are proclaimed in almost all the principal spoken languages of the globe, to every tribe and people in its own language — in Arabic and Greek — in Syriac and Persian — in Hindostanee and Malay and the Chinese, in the dialects of the American forests and of the Southern seas. India too, has become the battle field of the powers of Light and Darkness, and of Life and Death. The Appeal has come over from Australia and Transylvania, for religious sympathy and aid, in tones of peculiar and manifold eloquence. No inconsiderable portion of the persons who are gathering congregations and schools in foreign lands; and laying the slow and silent but sure foundations of

future Christianity in those benighted regions, are the sons and daughters of America; born and reared among our mountains and valleys—sent out and supported by the prayers and liberality of American Christians.

The chapter of American Missions, so far as it has yet been written, is a most important chapter in the history of our country, in relation to the conversion of the world to a pure faith—an enlightened Christianity and a spiritual worship. It is destined to be more and more so as time rolls on. As a Christian nation we are yet in our youth. The world ere long, will look to our beloved country for religious light and instruction—for a liberal and rational Christianity; as it now does for sympathy and example in the struggle for civil freedom. The world will learn from us the glorious emancipation from superstition and bigotry and error; as it learns from us *now* the emancipation from the bondage of misrule and tyrannical authority. Doubtless, one great design of the Spirit of the Lord in guiding our fathers to this land, and building them up at such a cost and on such firm foundations; was to make America the center and great source of Light and Truth for the “Everlasting Age,” and the progress of the Kingdom of the Son of God, which has already been established on the earth, and which shall never be destroyed.

This is the glorious design of Jehovah respecting the American nation. One great purpose in the divine plan is to advance and promote the *Universal spread of correct Scriptural Principles*. Men it is true, may be individually saved from sin, where darkness, error and prejudice still exists; for who would venture to assert that upright and devoted Catholics may not be saved, even by the partial admission of divine Light which penetrates through the mass of traditionary lore and superstitious observances by which “the Mother of *the*

Churches" is corrupted and enshrouded. It is *His* design to show to all mankind the glorious effects of a pure Christianity influencing a whole people — a spiritual theo-Christic democracy — acknowledging the supremacy of the "Higher Law" — that we shall not be in name only, but in very deed a *Christian People*. Who would not love such a Country? This consideration alone, would be a sufficient reason for a Christian, most earnestly and devoutly to pray for the continued peace, prosperity and perpetuity of this free and Christian America. Pray for the peace of our American Republic — they shall prosper that love thee. Because of Christianity, I will seek thy good.

II. I now proceed in the second place, to consider some of the *elements which are at work in our beloved Country*, calculated to disturb its peace, retard its prosperity, and undermine its perpetuity. The first element and dangerous feature in our *national character*, which I mention is —

1. A vain glorious boasting of our National privileges. That a grateful acknowledgment of the favors dispensed to us by the great Jehovah — a keen and elevating sense of our *national* advantages — natural, social and political; a devoted attachment to those principles of equal rights on which our government is founded — a pure and generous patriotism; that these are feelings both right and proper, I do not mean to deny. They are intimately connected with our duties as Christians and citizens of this highly favored country. The nation that forgets God can not prosper, Righteousness exalts a nation. Our fathers were men who feared God and kept his commandments. The corner-stone of our Republic was laid with prayers.

But permit me to ask, have we not as a people, as a great and prosperous nation, began more to lose sight of the AUTHOR of our privileges — instead

of acknowledging as our pious fathers did, the *hand of God* in all our blessings? Do we not consider them as a matter of course — as a birthright to which we have a natural claim? In this *spirit* of confident boasting, do not we imagine that no great or laborious efforts are necessary to preserve those blessings for which our fathers fought and bled; forgetful, notwithstanding all the lessons of history, that the *forms* of freedom may long remain after the *spirit* has fled; unmindful, that a luxurious, effeminate and irreligious people are not capable of enjoying true freedom.

Again, let me ask, is there not a positive and marked tendency to such a condition discoverable in our *national character*? Have we not in a great measure been drawn aside from the true source of a nation's prosperity and permanency — the virtue, the industry, the intelligence and the moral integrity of the people? Does not the opinion extensively prevail, that we may be a peaceful, prosperous and free people without Christianity? Is not the sentiment becoming quite prevalent that *Education* is the sole basis of civil liberty — that if Education can be universally diffused, all is safe — our noble institutions can not fall, our liberties can never be wrested from us? It is unquestionably true that a wide spread and *sound* education is indispensable to freedom; but it is not *freedom* itself; nor does it necessarily lead to it. The most enlightened mind, sometimes has a most corrupt heart. Some of the best educated countries in the world, have no dwelling place for liberty. Recent events, confirm the fact, that the irreligious, impious and mobocratic portion of the country are fast gaining the ascendancy in our nation, and sometimes filling many of the most important stations in the national government. Let us ever remember that Jehovah is the God of nations; and

that nations *as such*, receive their retribution and just recompense of reward *in this world*.

There is no one thing which will more directly tend to the peace, prosperity and stability of our government; and which at the same time is more demanded to allay the frenzied feelings of sectional strife, and prepare the way for calm and just counsels, and right decisions, than a deep, powerful and pervading sense of our dependence as a people, and our obligations as individuals to the Supreme Being. "Peace be within thee — because of the House of Jehovah our God, I will seek thy good."

2. Another element dangerous to the peace and prosperity of our country, and to the perpetuity of our free institutions — is connected with the very principles on which they are founded — THE RIGHT OF SUFFRAGE.

The ballot-box is a mighty instrument in the hands of freemen; but then it should be *stuffed* with the ballots of those who can intelligently exercise the great privilege. The right of suffrage should not be *universal*; neither should it be restricted to native or adopted citizens, nor confined to property, religion, nor age. The illiterate man is not qualified to exercise the responsible duty of the right of suffrage. Ignorant of the value and importance of a vote, he casts it at random. The man who can not read nor write, is the one who stands ready to sell his vote, and demagogues are as ready and willing to buy it. Here lies the danger and corrupting influence. There are thousands of young men without wealth and in their non-age, and thousands of intelligent, high-minded women in our country, better citizens and better qualified to discharge the duties of a voter, than the illiterate and bloated ruffian with all his birth and wealth and age. According to the census of 1850, Indiana contained 69,445 persons over 20

years of age unable to read or write. The following are some of the examples of native white citizens over 20 years of age, who can neither read nor write, as taken from the statistical table of the census of 1850. Tennessee has *one* in every 4. Virginia, Georgia and Kentucky 1 in every 5. South Carolina 1 in every 8. Ohio 1 in every 15. Pennsylvania 1 in every 21. New York 1 in every 56. Vermont 1 in every 268. Massachusetts 1 in every 408. The New England States contain the most enlightened, intelligent and virtuous citizens in the world. In view of the above statement, I ask to-day as a matter of information and inquiry, whether the right of suffrage might not be taken from ninety-nine out of every one hundred, and not affect in the least the result of any general election in our government. He who wields the ballot, should at least be a free and intelligent citizen.

3. Another element dangerous to the peace and prosperity of our beloved country and demoralizing in its influence, is the *spirit of partizan politics* — I mean the *politics of party*.

I would not wish to be understood that I am opposed to *politics* — that politics which Webster defines to be — “the science of government;” — “that part of ethics which consists in the regulation and government of a nation;” — with a view to preserve its — “safety, peace, and prosperity; — “comprehending the defence of its existence and rights,” against invasion and foreign control; “the augmentation of its strength, and resources;” “the preservation and improvement of their morals.” The study of a subject of such vast extent and importance, is the duty of every citizen, patriot, philanthropist and Christian.

Neither am I opposed to *party*. Party is the recognized bond of union, and the *only one* which renders effectual any design, policy, and measure

for the government of a people and to improve and promote their "morals." In the *political* world, the only means of taking *action* is by party. Therefore party organizations are necessary, and not as generally supposed, *necessary evils*; but instruments in the social and moral fabric, by which the voice of the people can be heard — vitality and activity given to their movements — and the will of the majority be made known and obeyed. There is great *power* in party; and when vested in the right hands, and influenced by correct principles, it is essential to the welfare, peace and prosperity of a nation. Virtue and intelligence are the only strength of a people.

Recognizing this principle as true, how important it is for a nation that its Rulers, Legislators and officials in every department of government should be deeply and properly imbued with the spirit of "Justice, Freedom and Temperance." How necessary that a people be indoctrinated in the spirit of Truth and Right; so as to choose for their Rulers, Judges and officers, who shall truly represent them in the sight of the Supreme Ruler and Governor of the Universe, and before an admiring world.

No highminded man — no true patriot will condescend to engage in a *mere* party strife. Much less can a *Christian*, and especially a Christian Minister consistently come down from his elevated and holy position and stoop so low as to contend in a mere *partizan* contest; for the prestige of an empty name; for the reckless scrambling of office! "A wind full of plague and sweeping the land — deadlier than the African Simoon, — a pitiless tornado, with hailstones and fire, mingling in its train." It would be degrading and destructive to the influence of the Ministry of Reconciliation to make it subservient to *mere* party interests. But it is the duty of every man, and the peculiar work

of the minister of Christ Jesus, to advocate the fundamental principles of Righteousness, Truth and Freedom, and the *universal claims* of Jehovah. The Ministers of the Gospel are less bound by the fetters of mere partizan politics, than any other intelligent and virtuous class of citizens in our country; but they are so much the more firmly wedded and strongly attached to the principles of justice — of right — of humanity — of Temperance and Freedom. It is the solemn and imperative duty of all honest and loyal citizens to engage in politics, with a view to preserve the “safety, peace and prosperity” of their country and “improve its morals.” And especially do *Christians* too much neglect this duty, and too often retire from the field of political strife, because they do not like to come in contact with *unholy elements* which they must meet. What makes the “muddy waters of politics,” unless it is that Christians and upright citizens leave demagogues and their coadjutors to do the foul work of *intrigue* and *machinery* of political partizanship. No wonder that so many people think that *politics* — “the science of government,” ought not to be carried into the pulpit! Certainly not party politics! But God has said — “When the Righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.”

Christianity, should therefore be the governing principle of every party organization; and it is the duty of every virtuous citizen — of every Christian and every minister of the gospel to participate in political action; and not confide their dearest rights and privileges — the peace and prosperity of our country in the hands of men, possessing no moral integrity — with no sacred flame of freedom burning on the altar of their hearts, and governed in life by no other law than party *expediency* and party interests — who deserve not the name

of politicians and statesmen — but of trading demagogues and hackneyed partizans; base and corrupt enough at any time to sell themselves — to sell their country, and even their own party.

4. I will mention but one more dangerous element existing in our country, now at work in disturbing its peace — retarding its prosperity and threatening its dissolution. I mean the restless, aggressive and rebellious spirit of the slave power.

This power has long existed in our country, and embodies the most dangerous elements of mischief. It was early admitted into these United States, and gradually developed itself in a series of unparalleled enormities. Years ago the patriotic eye watched its stealthy step as it constantly crept upward to seize the helm of government. The threatening peril was pointed out, and cautiously it was intimated that the glare of that demon eye betokened evil. But the monster instead of being met with manly firmness, and sent howling back to his own vile swamps and worn out plantations, was coaxed and fondled; and when he growled, was pacified by *Compromises*, and yielding up sufficient territorial domain to prowl over. Thus encouraged by supineness and strengthened by cowardice, it encircled us in its Anaconda folds, and at last made its deadly spring, and its venomous fangs are fastened in our flesh, its bloody jaws are at our throat, and our life-blood is now flowing on the battle field.

This power in our country, to which I refer, emanates from the system of American Slavery. It is based upon the behest and the interest of a *moneyed* and *political* aristocracy of some 400,000 Slaveholders, which has exerted its influence in the government by means of official patronage and through the *panic of fear*, created by boisterous declarations of disunion. Previous to the Rebellion, it held about *four million* of men, women and

children as goods and chattels, who were valued at the enormous sum of three thousand millions of dollars. It has given origin to a state of society that is hostile to human freedom — its civilization is of the lowest and most degraded type, and its Religion is the very sum of iniquity and unrighteousness.

Human Slavery as it exists in our nation, is denounced by every virtuous and enlightened citizen; it is not openly avowed or advocated by any political party or religious denomination, except in the Slave States; democracy has no participation in it — republicanism is entirely free from its polluted breath. Throughout all Christendom, a conscience has been aroused on this stupendous sin, so that it is condemned as unchristian by the civilized world.

In my remarks I shall be compelled to state some truths and facts which may be somewhat unpleasant and humiliating, although I do sincerely design them for our common welfare. I shall speak of the Slave Power, as embodied in law, and its organic workings and operations.

1st. *The Slave Power is the deadly foe to freedom.* Being itself the very incarnation of every wrong, and conscious it meets universal hatred, it most intensely hates freedom, its natural enemy, with the instinctive malice of satan against holiness. It reduces more than three millions of the people of this nation, men, women and children, born free as the air; to the condition of mere goods, chattels and merchandize — liable to be sold upon the shambles to the highest bidder; and as a consequence abolishes among all these millions (without respect to color), the institution of marriage; nullifies the authority and all the rights of the parental relation; and takes from them the key of Knowledge by prohibiting their education. It raises mobs to torture and abuse the men who it even

suspects of uttering, or wishes to utter a true word against its unhallowed authority; it drives away *gospel* ministers whom it dislikes, and repeats the persecutions of Heathendom. It enacts the most bloody laws. The holiest deeds are crimes in the diabolical code of this heartless power. It has fines and imprisonments for the duty of teaching *a Sinner* to read God's word of life and salvation; it has bloody scourging for the mother who aids her own daughter to escape from the house of bondage; it has the infamous lash for the maiden who raises her hand to give a blow in self defence, from the grasp of beastly lust; it has the penitentiary for giving a crumb of bread, or a cup of water to a perishing fugitive fleeing to breath the fresh air of a free soil.

2d. *The Slave Power, by its corrupting influence has perverted the government.* The Fathers of our country loved freedom, the slave power loves slavery. Our Fathers well knew that one or the other system must exclusively prevail in our land in the course of time. They regarded the existence of human slavery and chattelship in so many of the states with sorrow and shame, when they framed the Constitution of the Union; and they harmoniously determined to organize the government, and so direct its powers and energiès, that freedom should certainly prevail, and that slavery would in a short time as certainly disappear forever. For this purpose, our Fathers based the whole structure of government, broadly on the principle that all men are born equal, and therefore free; recognizing no other class of citizens but *persons*, that is human beings, who possessed certain inalienable rights, such as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. They established a system of apprenticeship as an organic law—a right of service or labor from *persons*, by the laws of any of the States, with a proviso, that such persons were not

obligated to render such service or labor, when taken under the jurisdiction of the laws of any other State, except when such *persons* escaped from such service or labor. By the ordinance of 1787, they consecrated all of the National domain not yet polluted and stained by the curse of slavery, to freedom and free labor, immediately, thenceforth and forever. Our Fathers wisely and necessarily modified this policy of freedom, by leaving it to the several States to abolish human slavery in their own way, by their own legislation, and at their own pleasure, instead of confiding that power to Congress.

Government is designed for the protection of Rights; and especially the rights of the weak, the innocent, and the poor and oppressed. The Congress has no power conferred to it to *convert* a "person," a human being into goods and chattels, no more than it can convert a "president" into a king. Human slavery can not exist under its jurisdiction, it has no right to prostitute the holy name and authority of Law, and endorse legislative enactments which are simply the embodiment of iniquity. The Congress has no right to legislate for slavery. The District of Columbia belongs to the American nation. Every legal act in that District owes its authority to Congress, and as long as it upheld slavery at our Capitol by American legislation, it fastened a gigantic sin upon the whole nation, because oppression is not measured by *weight*, but by the *light* under which it is practiced.

The Slave Power has perverted the channels of our government, and previous to the Secession of the confederate slave States, it had gained the entire possession, and for more than twenty-five years it had substantially controlled it in all its departments. Previous to 1844, it had violated the express provisions of the Constitution, by de-

nying the right of petition and free discussion in Congress as far as Slavery was concerned in the District of Columbia. It has created and annihilated political parties at its pleasure. Under all these circumstances and in the light of these facts, to expect the Slave Power will resist and renounce human slavery, is as unreasonable as to look to the Catholic Propaganda at Rome to send out and support Protestant missionaries to convert the world.

3. The Slave Power has finally rebelled against the government, and *now threatens the dissolution of the Union*. The contest into which we are now forced, is "a war of rightful government against lawless Rebellion; of the Constitution against conspiracy; of union against confusion; of liberty against slavery; of humanity against barbarism; of patriotic benevolence against selfish despotism; and of a pure, unfettered Christianity against a pernicious theology — perverting mind, conscience and even the teachings of the Bible, for the support of a state of society and domestic institutions that have filled the land with pollution and oppression."

The Slaveholding Confederate States by seceding from the Union and "revolting against the authority of the national government, by organizing hostile armies, by fighting battles, and by inviting the aid of foreign monarchs to destroy our Republic, have assumed a belligerent attitude, which places them in the position of public enemies. They are amenable to all the rules and penalties of the international law of belligerents."

In a late work entitled "*The Sectional Controversy*," it is admitted that for more than fifty years, "the question of Slavery has been a bone of contention between the southern and northern sections, giving color to all other questions, inflaming their animosities — disturbing legislation — peril-

ing the existence of the government, and leading finally to a tremendous eruption of fratricidal passions, and a malignant armed struggle." At the present time the excitement is broader, the hatred intenser, and the determination on both sides firmer than at any former period. For a "year and a half of the bloodiest conflicts, which have involved not only the whole nation, but the civilized world in their vortex, the contest has been rendered the more direct — more obstinate — more energetic — and more impossible of pacific solution."

The aggressions and oppressions of the Slave Power have aroused the popular mind, until its arm has been broken at the Capitol of the Nation! The 37th Congress have thrown off the incubus of Slavery from the District of Columbia, and made the national territories forever free from its pollution and curse. In addition to all this, "the people of the north, genuine heirs of the 19th century, and sharing the convictions and sentiments of the civilized world, are more and more assured that Slavery is a moral wrong — a political curse, and in every other aspect a terrible evil." These convictions can not be changed — these sentiments can not be eradicated.

What 'then shall be done? There is but one alternative in the case; either the north and south must separate; or Slavery, the sole cause of the rebellion and the subject of all our past and present calamities must be removed. A peaceful separation and recognition of Independence is utterly impracticable; secession, and a dissolution of the Union, if it were possible, would be a state of ceaseless war.

Then apply the remedy. For the sake of peace, enduring peace, slavery must be exterminated from the land; for the prosperity of the country, the nation must be purified from its pollutions;

and for the perpetuity of the Union, slavery must die! The Commander-in-Chief, by military necessity and potency, and the Congress by prompt legislation, without doing violence to the Constitution, are entreated and demanded by every lawful means in their power, "to fulfill our native destiny, by making real that glorious ideal of human freedom with which we began." Then our American Republic, thus "disenthralled, homogeneous, united; instinct with a new life and energy and goodness, would become in fact, what she once was and still is by aspiration, the home of truly democratic institutions; the nurse of every just and generous policy — domestic and international; the asylum of earth's oppressed; the hope and model of mankind, to which the heroes of the old world, in their stern struggles for larger light and liberty would turn with solace; and statesmen in their boldest schemes of human grandeur, look for guidance."

Let us then, beloved brethren and friends, come with profound gratitude before the Most High, and render our sincere thanks, "for his mercies, countless in number and infinite in extent," and implore his blessing that Peace may revisit us. "Let us pray for the *President* of the United States, and those that rule over us, that they may have the wisdom and grace they need; for our armies, their generals, officers and soldiers, that they may be directed and prospered in their attempt to suppress the rebellion; for our people and the nation at large, that they may have grace given them to put away the sins that prevail among us, especially every thing that oppresseth and maketh a lie; and that they may accomplish the reformatations needed in society, to prevent intemperance and sabbath-breaking; and the avarice, licentiousness, fraud, and whatever sins may have found favor in their eyes. Let us implore the divine forgiveness for

our soldiers, endangered by the vices of the camp ; for our sons and kindred among them, that they may be preserved from the temptations and perils to which they are exposed. Let us remember the sick and wounded and dying in our hospitals ; the oppressed and enslaved in their bondage and terrors, and forget not our enemies, that they may be brought to repentance, and lay down the weapons of their rebellion. The bereaved and afflicted families of our land should also share in our sympathy and prayers.”

Let us most fervently beseech the Lord God, that he would bestow upon us as a people, an enlightened and liberal, yet earnest patriotism—a sincere regard for law—a due and just attachment to the Constitution of our Union—a stern determination to maintain the right without concessions or compromises with the wrong ; above all, an earnest, pervading sense of dependence on Him, with whom lies the question of our destiny. If we valiantly take the side of truth and justice—of God and of man, peace is sure ; and prosperity will cover our broad land with enterprise, temperance and freedom. The favor of our God will rest on us. We shall go on with our country’s mission as the world’s benefactor and friend, and the Home of Freedom to generations yet unborn. Amen.



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